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Message Text

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54
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 SAM-01 NIC-01 DRC-01

/063 W
---------- 052993
R 271202Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7868
INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL POZNAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 1097

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PL, VIT
SUBJECT: POLISH REGIME PLAYING ON ALLEGED VATICAN-EPISCOPATE DIFFERENCES

REF: A) WARSAW 846, B) WARSAW 776. C) WARSAW 959, D) ROME 2565, E) STATE 038437

ROME FOR ILLING

1. SUMMARY: SOME STRAWS IN THE WIND INDICATE THE WAY IN WHICH THE POLISH GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO PLAY UP DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE VATICAN AND THE POLISH EPISCOPATE. CARDINAL MINDSZENTY'S FORCED RETIREMENT, PARTICULARLY ITS TIMING, FIGURES PROMINENTLY IN THIS. WE HAVE REPORTED THE CONCERN HIS REMOVAL IS CAUSING IN CATHOLIC CIRCLES HERE (REF A). WE WOULD APPRECIATE WHATEVER READING CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE VATICAN ABOUT MINDSZENTY'S RETIRE-
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MENT AND PARTICULARLY ITS ANNOUNCEMENT AT THE TIME OF

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CASAROLI'S VISIT TO POLAND. END SUMMARY.

2. AN AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT VISITING WARSAW RECENTLY TELLS US THAT HIS INTERPRESS CONTACT TRIED TO INTEREST HIM IN A STORY ABOUT THE RECENT CASAROLI VISIT (REF B), STRESSING DIVERGENCIES BETWEEN THE VATICAN AND THE POLISH EPISCOPATE. THE CORRESPONDENT SAID HE HAD THE FEELING INTERPRESS WAS TRYING TO "USE" HIM, AND HE TELLS US THAT HE WILL NOT WRITE SUCH A STORY.

3. THE INTERPRESS LINE DESCRIBED BY THE CORRESPONDENT ACCORDS WITH THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CASAROLI VISIT GIVEN US BY PROVINCIAL LEADERS IN GDANSK (REF C). IT ALSO FOLLOWS THE LINE ADVANCED IN A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE LITERARY WEEKLY KULTURA BY ROME CORRESPONDENT ZDZISLAW MORAWSKI. RECAPITULATING THE CASAROLI VISIT TO WARSAW IN THE CONTEXT OF THE VATICAN'S EASTERN POLICY, MORAWSKI SUGGESTS THAT, IN ORDER TO BETTER ITS RELATIONS WITH THE SOCIALIST REGIMES, THE VATICAN IS TRYING TO DE-POLOTICIZE CHURCH ACTIVITY IN THESE COUNTRIES. HE CITES MINDSZENTY'S REMOVAL BY WAY OF EXAMPLE. ADDITIONALLY, HE SUGGESTS THAT CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI AND THE POLISH EPISCOPATE ARE OBSTACLES TO THE VATICAN IN ITS EFFORTS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH WARSAW. MORAWSKI CHARGES THAT WYSZYNSKI'S REMARKS AND AN EPISCOPATE STATEMENT MADE SHORTLY BEFORE THE CASAROLI VISIT HINDERED CASAROLI'S MISSION IN WARSAW. THIS IS APPARENTLY A REFERENCE TO THE EPISCOPATE PLENUM HELD ON JANUARY 23-24 (REF B). MORAWSKI FURTHER ALLEGES THAT WYSZYNSKI DECLINED TO ATTEND THE FORMAL DINNER HOSTED BY FOREIGN MINISTER OLSZOWSKI IN CASAROLI'S HONOR AND THE LATTER'S RETURN DINNER FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER. FINALLY, MORAWSKI CITES CASAROLI'S ALLEGED EMPHASIS ON THE NECESSITY OF OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SEE DURING HIS REMARKS FOLLOWING WYSZYNSKI'S SERMON AT THE WARSAW CATHEDRAL. (IN FACT, THE THRUST OF CASAROLI'S REMARKS IN ITALIAN WAS TO EXPRESS THE POPE'S THANKS TO THE POLISH CHURCH FOR ITS SPIRITUAL SUPPORT FOR THE PAPACY OVER THE CENTURIES AND TO ASK POLES TO PRAY FOR THE HOLY FATHER IN A PERIOD WHEN INTERNAL DIVISIONS IN THE WORLD-WIDE CHURCH WERE OFTEN AS SERIOUS AS EXTERNAL PRESSURES, OR CONFIDENTIAL

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EVEN MORE SO).

4. COMMENT: IT MAY WEEL BE TRUE THAT THE VATICAN IS SEEKING TO DE-POLITICIZE ITS RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST REGIMES, BUT IT IS ALMOST SURELY INEXACT TO SAY THAT WYSZYNKSI IS IMPEDING THIS EFFORT. DESPITE THE CARDINAL'S WELL-DESERVED REPUTATION AS A MASTER POLITICIAN, HIS OBJECTIVES ARE NOT PRIMARILY POLITICAL BUT RELIGIOUS.

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WHAT HE SEEKS IS ASSURANCE THAT THE CHURCH WILL CONTINUE
TO EXIST IN POLAND AS A VIABLE INSTITUTION, FREE TO
TEACH ITS DOCTRINES, AND THAT ITS COMMUNICANTS WILL NOT
BE SUBJECT TO DIRECT OR INDICRECT PENALTIES BY REASON OF
THEIR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES. WYSZYNSKI AND THE POLISH
EPISCOPATE WOULD SAY QUITE PROPERLY THAT IF THESE OBJEC-
TIVES CONSTITUTE POLITICAL ISSUES, THAT IS BECAUSE THE
COMMUNIST REGIME CHOOSES TO TREAT THEM AS SUCH.
WYSZYNSKI HAS NEVER OPPOSED GENUINE CO-EXISTENCE OF
CHURCH AND STATE IN POLAND, AND HAS IN FACT BEEN ACCUSED
IN THE PAST OF A WILLINGNESS TO VB TOO FAR ON THIS ISSUE
BY MINDSZENTY AND OTHER EXTREME CONSERVATIVES.

5. WE ARE NOT SURE WHAT THE VATICAN' S GAME PLAN IS AND HOW
POLAND FITS INTO IT. HOWEVER, WE VENTURE THE VIEW THAT
THE VATICAN SEES POLAND AS A STEPPING-STONE TOWARD THE
LARGER PRIZE OF NORMALIZATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND
THE AMELIORATION OF THE LOT OF CATHOLICS IN LITHUANIA
AND THE WESTERN USSR. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE SOVIETS ARE
OPPOSED TO THE POLISH REGIME'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS RE-
LATIONS WITH THE VATICAN. INDEED WE ARE SURE THAT
THE POLES HAVE OBTAINED SOVIET SANCTION AND ARE COORDINATING
THEIR ACTIONS THOROUGHLY WITH MOSCOW. THUS, CHURCH-
STATE RELATIONS AND NORMALIZATION WITH THE VATICAN WERE
UNDOUBTELDY IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN FOREIGN MINISTER
OLSZOWSKI'S FEBRUARY 11-12 DISCUSSIONS IN MOSCOW, PARTI-
CULARLY SINCE GROMYKO HIMSELF WAS SOON TO VISIT ROME AND
THE VATICAN.

6. WE ARE INCLINED TO REGARD THE TIMING, AT LEAST, OF
MINDSZENTY'S REMOVAL AS INFLUENCED BY GROMYKO'S THEN
IMPENDING VISIT TO THE VATICAN RATHER THAN BY ITS IMPLICA-
TIONS FOR WARSAW-VATICAN RELATIONS. THOSE IMPLICATIONS,
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WHETHER INTENDED OR NOT, ARE NEVERTHELESS HAVING THEIR
IMPACT IN POLAND, AND AN ELUCIDATION OF VATICAN MOTIVATIONS
IN THE TIMING OF MINDSZENTY'S REMOVAL WOULD HELP US
UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION HERE.
DAVIES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, VISITS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974WARSAW01097
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: WARSAW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974024/aaaaadva.tel
Line Count: 159
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) WARSAW 846, B) WARSAW 776. C) WAR, SAW 959
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <11 JUN 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLISH REGIME PLAYING ON ALLEGED VATICAN- EPISCOPATE DIFFERENCES
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PL, (CASAROLI, ARCHBISHOP)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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